

Kissinger: millions rely on us

GENEVA TALKS OPEN TODAY

Special table arrangement to satisfy Arabs

By AKI RATH, Jerusalem Post Correspondent

GENEVA. — The Middle East peace conference has become a fact. It opens at 10.30 a.m. this morning at the historic Council chamber at the Palais des Nations here. The Israel, Egyptian and Jordanian delegations, as well as the American and Soviet co-chairmen and conference "convenor" UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, will be seated around tables arranged in a hexagonal pattern, with one empty table set aside for Syria.

There will be a 40 cm. gap between each of the six tables, at the request of the Arab delegations, to make sure it is not a full round-table conference. This is a conference where questions of procedure and technicalities are regarded as matters of substance. But soon after the ceremonial opening, the conference will adjourn until talks on military disengagement between Israel and Egypt resume early in January, after the Knesset elections. By noon today, the long-awaited peace conference will have finally got off the ground — to what sort of start will depend to some extent on the tone and content of the six opening speeches.

The first, probably non-committal, statement by Dr. Waldheim, will be followed by speeches by Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger — co-chairmen of the conference — and by Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy, Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban and Jordanian Prime Minister Zaid Rifai, in that order. This is only the beginning of a long road. Even Waldheim expected yesterday the peace conference would last throughout most of 1974, if not longer. It will be an achievement if it does not get bogged down before that. But despite a general feeling here that the whole affair got off on the wrong foot, the fact that the peace conference is actually taking place has given rise to hope that something may still come of it.

The most fervent and dramatic appeal for the success of the talks was made by Kissinger, the

architect of the conference. (See story this page.) A flurry of diplomatic activity throughout the day and the evening preceded the conference opening. It will probably continue until the last minute today.

Gromyko met twice yesterday with Fahmy and for one hour with Waldheim. Then Waldheim came to see Eban in the evening just before going to a working dinner with Fahmy. A Jordanian delegate said Rifai also held several meetings (see below).

But the most important meeting of all was the working dinner yesterday evening attended by Kissinger and Gromyko, when Kissinger was expected to report on his recent Middle East tour, during which he may have saved the conference from total failure, before it even started.

Kissinger is to meet with Eban for breakfast this morning, only two hours before the opening, but contacts between the Israel and U.S. delegations were being held throughout the evening.

Israel delegation sources said yesterday that the "other side" understood Israel's election problems and had agreed in principle to hold the military disengagement talks only in early January. These may, however, be preceded by continuous informal or even formal contacts between Israel and Egypt, so that the conference may be regarded as being in session even during the Christmas and New Year recess.

The official languages of the peace conference will be French, English and Russian. Most stringent security measures will be in force for the opening session and throughout the proceedings (see page 4). Among the 150 journalists and TV photographers to be admitted to the Council chamber's press gallery will be 10 Israeli newsmen, including The Jerusalem Post correspondent.

Although it is almost certain that the opening session will be held in the Council chamber, as scheduled, a secluded villa in Arian Park near the Palais is being kept ready as standby, should security precautions require a change of venue at the last moment. Four rooms adjacent to the press halls at the Palais have been taken over as press liaison offices of the Russian, Israeli, Egyptian and American delegations. Most background information is being provided by the Israelis.

The spokesman of the Soviet delegation yesterday evening invited me to come to his office, but would not elaborate on anything pertaining to the peace conference, besides referring each time to Gromyko's arrival statement on Wednesday. He thought he might be able to say more today or tomorrow. We all may be wiser by then.

Eban offers Arabs peace with honour

Jerusalem Post Correspondent

GENEVA. — Foreign Minister Abba Eban arrived here yesterday morning at head of the official Israeli delegation to the Middle East peace conference, offering "peace with honour" to Israel's Arab neighbours. Mr. Eban urged that "all the conditions of peaceful existence, including the establishment of a peace boundaries, should be approached in a spirit of flexible compromise."

In an obvious reminder of Israel's displeasure over the attempt to have the UN assume control of the conference, Mr. Eban said it was taking place "under the chairmanship of the U.S. and the Soviet Union." He added: "We should negotiate peace treaties, bringing decades of hostility to an end." Mr. Eban concluded with his pledge that "we have come to seek peace with honour and offer peace with honour to the neighbouring states."

The Israeli delegation's special El Al Boeing 720 touched down at Geneva's heavily guarded Cointrin airport, just outside the centre of the city. The blue and white jet drew up on the tarmac close to the lounge which has been set aside for arriving official delegations. After making his arrival statement in English, to the sound of dozens of whirling TV cameras, Mr. Eban switched to French to greet the citizens of Geneva. Over a dozen limousines waited on the tarmac, guarded by open Swiss military jeeps carrying heavily armed soldiers, to whisk Mr. Eban and his entourage to the hotel just outside Geneva where the Israeli delegation is staying.

Mr. Eban's moderate, low-key statement on arrival, stressing the need for peace treaties and compromise, was seen here as indicating the spirit of his address at today's opening session of the peace conference.

Earlier yesterday UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim arrived, stating that the conference was a "turning point in the efforts to find a solution for the Middle East problem."

Live TV cast

Israel TV will relay the opening of the conference from Geneva by communications satellite at 11.15 this morning. The school TV programmes have been cancelled to make way for the broadcast.

Jordanian Premier arrives in secrecy

By ANAN SAFADI

Jerusalem Post Correspondent

GENEVA. — Jordan's Premier and Foreign Minister, Zaid Rifai arrived here yesterday at the head of his country's delegation to the Middle East peace conference opening today.

Rifai's unannounced arrival at about 3 p.m. was enveloped in complete secrecy. Even Arab diplomats here were unaware of his arrival until a much later hour.

Rifai was a target of an assassination attempt by the Black September movement late in 1971. He was taken to a secret address outside this lake-side city along with the members of his delegation.

Sources close to the Jordanian mission here told The Jerusalem Post that Rifai would reassert Jordan's insistence on the recovery of East Jerusalem and the West Bank within the framework of an overall Middle East settlement under Security Council resolution 242.

The Jordanian sources went further to stress that Rifai would be flexible over the question of Palestinian representation at the conference, probably signalling a major turning point in Amman's policy which has so far objected to any independent Palestinian representation.

U.S. officials: 'It may take years for settlement'

By ISA SILVERMAN

Jerusalem Post Correspondent

WASHINGTON. — On the eve of the Geneva conference, American officials here acknowledge that it may take years to reach a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement, but they are nevertheless hopeful that the talks, put together at their initiative, will be successful.

State Department and White House sources stress that progress toward a Middle East settlement could lead to a lowering of East-West tension, a reduction of the Soviet influence in the Middle East, an end to the Arab oil embargo and, not least, a visible achievement for the Watergate-weakened Nixon Administration.

Some Administration officials this week offered their assessment of the prospects for the conference. No one is willing to bet that any dramatic gains will be made in the next few months, and certainly not in the opening session before the Israeli elections. But neither does any of them predict an early collapse of the talks, due to deal first with troop disengagement on the Israeli-Egyptian front.

The news of the Syrian refusal to attend has still brought no official comment, but some American sources shared the sense of relief.

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 5)

Jobert to visit Israel

PARIS (AP). — French Foreign Minister Michel Jobert will start a series of visits to Middle East countries, including Israel, with a trip to Saudi Arabia at the end of January, official sources said yesterday.

The sources said Jobert would visit two or three countries on each of a number of trips.

Disengagement talks January — Meir

By WALLFISH

Post Knesset Reporter

Statement to the Knesset yesterday, Premier Golda Meir said a cautiously optimistic view of the prospects at the conference.

Meir also warned the Knesset that it would not be its "clear responsibility" to accept the prisoners of war but also tried to allay their fate was in fact not (see col. 3).

Meir said that the Israeli delegation had approved Mrs. Meir's 50 votes to 19, with 50 votes for were it not for the independent voting against were the and the Knesset's abstentions came from communists and the Re- which ostentatiously on discipline over the participation at the

said the Israeli delegation had clear instructions to every effort to add peace. She added: at the new Government negotiations will reflect our ring for peace within

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PoWs alive in Syria

Jerusalem Post Staff and Agencies

A still undetermined number of Israeli prisoners of war were believed still alive in Syrian captivity, out of some 140 who were reported missing on the northern front at the end of the October war. This information is based on pictures, TV films and radio interviews with Israeli PoWs, it is learned.

The Syrians murdered at least 42 Israeli prisoners but it is believed that these atrocities were committed on or near the battlefields. Informed sources believe that most of the PoWs who made it past the front lines and were interrogated have been living under bearable — if degrading — conditions.

Prime Minister Golda Meir told the Knesset yesterday that the Pentagon and U.S. intelligence agencies had assured Israel that to the best of their knowledge it was not true that no Israeli prisoners were still alive in Syria.

Mrs. Meir recalled that, when the cease-fire agreement was drafted, Soviet Communist Party chief Leonid Brezhnev gave his word of honour that everything possible would be done to help secure the prisoners' release. President Nixon has since appealed to Mr. Brezhnev several times to keep this promise.

To obtain the release of its prisoners, Israel had agreed that 15,000 Syrian civilians be returned to the homes they left, and that U.N. forces be stationed on two Mount Hermon outposts now in Israeli hands. Industrial political parties, including Arabs, have tried to intercede with Damascus, but to no avail, she said.

In Oslo, Foreign Ministry sources yesterday said Norway has approached Syria concerning the release of the Israeli prisoners. A government note expressing concern for the plight of the PoWs was delivered to Syria's U.N. ambassador, Haiman Kahan, at a meeting Wednesday with Norway's permanent U.N. representative, Ole Aalgard.

Israel has 63 Egyptian PoWs

The Israel Defence Forces are holding 63 Egyptian prisoners of war, including eight officers, captured on the southern front after the POW exchange between Israel and Egypt last month, the Israeli army spokesman announced last night.

He said they were all captured in Israeli-held territory on both banks of the Suez Canal, but did not say how they were captured. There are no Israeli prisoners left in Egypt, the spokesman said.

Blast kills Spanish Premier

MADRID. — General Franco's Prime Minister and right-hand man was assassinated as he rode through a Madrid street yesterday — victim of a bomb triggered by remote control.

Seventy-year-old Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco died in hospital of injuries sustained when the blast tossed his car five storeys over a building and into the courtyard of a church where he had just attended Mass.

Security forces built up a picture of the assassination plot, after on-the-spot investigations. An information Ministry announcement said the assassins had dug a tunnel out into the middle of the road from the basement of a house, and then planted the bomb there. They triggered it as the Prime Minister's car passed on a customary journey from the church.

Two persons in the car with Carrero were also killed. Some suspicion for the killing settled immediately on the basque guerrilla organization, dedicated to overthrowing the government. However, the guerrillas normally operate in the Northern Basque provinces. (Reuters, AP, UPI)

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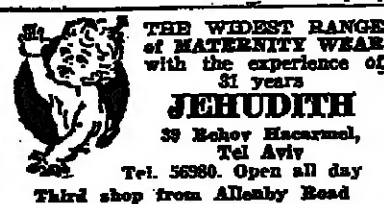
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Return: of Transport and Relations, Shimon Peres.
in: or Yuval Ne'eman, at Tel Aviv University.
marriage of Paniel
1.30 a.m. Coffee Break
m.—1.00 p.m. CLOSING SESSION
Chairman: Mr. Shimon Arai, C.E., I.T.C.C. Executive Committee
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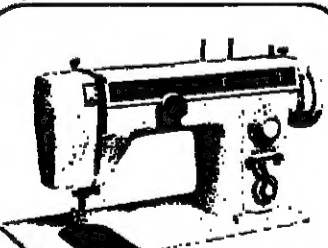
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ALSO AT ALL DUTY-FREE AGENCIES.\$2,200m. from U.S. for arms
SENATE VOTES
ISRAEL AID

WASHINGTON (Reuter). — The Senate voted yesterday to authorize \$2,200m. in emergency aid to Israel to replace arms losses sustained in the war.

The vote on the bill in favour of the aid was 66 to nine. Already approved by the House of Representatives, the measure now goes to the White House for President Nixon's signature.

The Senate approved the funds for Israel after defeating a series of amendments introduced by Senator William Fulbright (Democrat, Arkansas) to cut them back or to put off the measure for further deliberation.

Senator Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, argued that providing massive military aid to Israel at this time would undermine the Middle East peace conference by "sending

the wrong signals" to the parties involved. The Israelis would read Senate approval of the aid as a sign that they would not have to negotiate, while the Arabs would decide the talks were hopeless, Senator Fulbright said.

Supporters of Israel said the money was necessary to maintain a military balance in the Middle East and to give Israel a strong negotiating position in the peace talks.

The actual money for Israel is contained in an overall Foreign Aid Appropriations Bill approved by a joint Senate-House of Representatives conference committee on Wednesday.

However, the Foreign Aid Appropriations Bill contains a provision that states that the aid for Israel is contingent upon passage of an authorizing bill, which sets the ceiling for expenditures.

U.N. men 'fear Palestinian terror'
TIGHT SECURITY
IN GENEVA

GENEVA. — Security precautions for the Middle East peace talks opening here today have been described as the most stringent ever seen in this traditional "city of peace."

Swiss authorities have mobilized police from all over the country and brought in cadets from the Swiss army training school at Berne to guard Geneva's airport and the Palais des Nations.

Armed police guarded all approaches to the hotels where the main delegates are staying. U.S. and Israeli secret service agents have joined U.N. and Swiss security police in maintaining security precautions.

Ten truckloads of troops in battle dress were on hand at the airport for the arrival of delegations, with policemen lining the route into the city.

Police broke into and searched an automobile with Algerian license plates that had been parked for two days near the main railroad station, but reported finding no bombs or weapons.

Geneva police sources said that more than 100 American agents were in town to protect Secretary of State Henry Kissinger — at a cost of one million dollars.

"It looks like being the biggest security blanket ever, and the biggest reason is the fear of Palestinian terrorists," one of the United Nations top security officials said.

"The hijacking and killings at Rome this week have created a top alert situation," he said.

News of the death in Madrid in a bomb explosion of Spanish Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco made security men even tenser.

Both U.S. and Israeli agents have joined U.N. security officials in checking newsmen entering the section of the Palais des Nations reserved for news media.

The Palais, European headquarters of the United Nations, mobilized its full security force and brought

in outsiders to help, among them George Ashton, former personal bodyguard of the late Sir Winston Churchill when he was British Prime Minister.

Egyptian, American and Jordanian bodyguards warily eyed each other in Geneva's Intercontinental Hotel — where their delegations are staying.

Swiss soldiers guarded the hotel with machineguns. Two stood on the roof of the nearby Palais des Nations, scrutinizing pedestrians in the courtyard below who had already had to pass through two credential checks.

Armed Swiss police guarded the grounds of the hotel La Reserve — where Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban and his delegation were staying. Entry into the grounds of the hotel was allowed only after careful scrutiny of the identity of visitors.

Security precautions included walkie-talkie checks between police at the entrance of the hotel grounds with colleagues within the premises, as a double-check on documents shown to the guards.

Security guards will make full searches of reporters covering the opening of the talks and photographers have been warned to use film magazines that can be exposed to daylight without being ruined.

A U.N. spokesman said that security officials wanted no journalists to be at the meetings in the Council chamber at the Palais. But a compromise was reached whereby 150 of the 600 accredited will be allowed to attend.

Others will have to follow by closed-circuit television.

For those entering, "there will be a complete search of people, equipment and film magazines. Camera-men must have the kind of equipment which enables them to change the film in daylight," the spokesman said.

Departures during the session will be restricted and anyone who leaves and tries to re-enter will be fully searched again. (AP, UPI, Reuter)

Loans plan for firms
hit by tourist drop

Jerusalem Post Reporter

The Ministry of Tourism is considering a proposal for the grant of loans on easy terms to commercial enterprises hit by the drop in tourism.

The proposal emerges from a study of the situation in the tourist industry by the sub-committee on tourism and hotels, attached to the Emergency Advisory Council. It was discussed yesterday by a group of senior ministry officials, chaired by Minister Moshe Kol.

The total sum of the loans considered was IL5.2m., for the six-month period from October to March next year.

The sub-committee report recommended that recipients of loans include hotels, travel agencies, tour operators, souvenir shops, guides and organizers of international conventions. The report also suggested intensified promotion of tourism, including increased publicity abroad in the various media available, the total cost of which was estimated at IL2.1m.

Mr. Kol also delegated his Director-General, Hanoah Givon, to consult with the Treasury on the possibility of offering material incentives to regions suffering from the tourism slowdown.

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Soviet and Egyptian Foreign Ministers Andrei Gromyko and Ismail Fahmy smile as they are greeted by newsmen after dining together in Geneva on Wednesday night.

U.S. CALL TO KUWAIT REPORTED

Italy wants to try hijackers

ROME. — Italian Justice Minister Mario Zagari is to ask for the extradition of the five Arab terrorists who carried out the Rome airport massacre and are now in custody in Kuwait, justice officials said here.

Mr. Zagari will present an extradition request to the Foreign Ministry to be transmitted to the Kuwaiti Government through diplomatic channels.

The request was expected to be presented yesterday after a magistrate dealing with the case had prepared charges against the group, the officials said.

Legal experts here said likely charges against the Arabs included massacre, multiple homicide, grievous bodily harm, kidnap, and the importing of weapons of war.

The U.S. has urged Kuwait to either put on trial or extradite the five terrorists, the State Department said in Washington.

Department spokesman Paul Hare said that the U.S. Ambassador in Kuwait, William Stoltzfus, had been directed to reaffirm that justice should be carried out.

A Beirut report says that terrorist leader Yasser Arafat is seeking the extradition of the five hijackers so that they can "stand

trial before a Palestinian revolutionary court."

Arafat has instructed the Kuwait office of the Palestine Liberation Organization to put the extradition request to the Kuwaiti Government, the Beirut newspaper "Al-Moharrir" reported yesterday.

The terrorist-controlled Palestinian agency Wafa reported that the FLO would demand that the gunmen be turned over to the terrorist leadership after the interrogation "so that a proper punishment be meted out on them."

'NOT TERROR CENTRE'

In Rome, the head of the police political office, Dr. Umberto Imbrota, denied reports that there was a permanent Arab base in Rome which helped terrorists passing through the Italian capital or launching attacks from there.

He also said that police now believed there had been only five terrorists, and earlier reports that others had been involved were for the moment discounted.

Despite the Bonn hijacking, Lufthansa planes continued to fly without security men yesterday.

A member of the management board of Lufthansa, Werner Utter,

said in Frankfurt yesterday the fact that all but one of the hostages aboard the plane hijacked by the terrorists in Rome survived experience proved the company decision was right.

"We will continue to fly with weapons or armed men aboard planes," Utter told a news conference.

But the Interior Minister of Bonn, Bruno Merk, has proposed that the Federal Government ask landing permission to any arriving or departing passengers advance that passengers luggage have been searched.

Following the Rome mass airports around Europe are tightening their security measures.

In Brussels, the number of gun around aircraft has been increased and mounted policemen patrol the airport.

In Copenhagen, the airport has been provided with arms.

In Paris, French airport authorities will search all passengers. Only Airport both on arrival and departure. Sharpshooters will be duty round the clock and arm guards are being posted close around aircraft. (Reuter, AP, UPI, IN

'MAY TAKE
YEARS'

(Continued from page one)

expressed by Israelis here. The absence of the Syrians is expected to soften the Arab negotiating position, and enable the Israeli delegation to avoid a showdown on the prisoner-of-war issue and thus to participate in the talks.

It was reported here that officials travelling with Secretary of State Kissinger indicated that the Secretary was assured by Syrian President Assad that the Israeli prisoners were being "well treated."

It is thought that Syria is following North Vietnam's example of using the prisoners as a bargaining weapon.

The resolution of Israeli-Syrian differences, however, is not seen as crucial for progress in the Israeli meeting with Egypt and Jordan. The absence of Syria from Geneva is in fact viewed by some observers as a potentially positive factor in getting the talks moving.

Some U.S. officials resent the continued American and Israeli press reports of American strong-arm pressure on Israel to make major concessions in the course of the conference. While they do not doubt that American leverage will be used to obtain Israeli flexibility, they insist that no such pressure has yet been brought to bear to force Israeli concessions.

They point to evidence of continued American good faith in its commitment to Israel and its security needs. Among these signs, they say, are the American efforts for a low-level involvement of the U.N. in the Geneva talks, and the Administration's determination to obtain \$2,200m. in military aid for Israel.

"They already have all the leverage they need," one Israeli source said. "The question is how they will use it." No high American official has yet offered an answer.

U.N. troops 'endangered'
in Suez battle

CAIRO (Reuter). — The U.N. Emergency Force (Unef) yesterday lodged strong protests with Egypt and Israel over a gun battle which endangered U.N. troops along the Suez Canal cease-fire line.

In the exchange, on Wednesday night, Finnish U.N. troops were planned down by Israeli and Egyptian mortars, machineguns and small arms. There were no U.N. casualties, but a supply building used by the Finns was hit by small arms fire.

Wednesday's clash followed more than a week of heightened activity along the cease-fire line.

On Tuesday the number of violations of the cease-fire reached a new record of 71, U.N. spokesman Rudolf Stajdhar said.

Informal sources said the growing use of mortars and machineguns might a serious change for the worse in the front line.

Mr. Stajdhar said the U.N. did not identify which side started shooting on Wednesday night.

The Unef commander, Gen. Ennio Silasvuo, lodged a protest with both sides and appealed for restraint to observe cease-fire and ensure the safety of Unef personnel, the spokesman said.

Syria rejects pressure

BEIRUT (UPI). — Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam flew to Saudi Arabia and North Yemen yesterday to deliver messages from Syrian President Hafez Assad, the Iraqi News Agency reported.

After a brief meeting with Saudi Arabia's King Faisal in Riyadh, Khaddam flew on to the Yemeni capital of Sana'a to meet President Abdel Rahman Iryani.

In its dispatch from Sana'a the Iraqi agency quoted Khaddam as saying the message from Assad dealt with the general situation in the Arab region and Syria's refusal to attend the Geneva conference.

In his statement at Sana'a, Khaddam said Syria was subjected to all kinds of pressure to make the government change mind about boycotting the conference, but rejected them all.

"Syria is not a country that submits to pressures," Khaddam said on Wednesday. Assad's message from Soviet Communist Party chief Leonid Brezhnev via visit from Jordan's King Hussein.

Diplomatic sources said they feared both Brezhnev and Hussein urged Assad to attend the conference in the interests of Arab solidarity.

All well on Soyuz-13

MOSCOW (AP). — The two Soviet cosmonauts aboard their Soyuz-13 spacecraft conducted scientific experiments on the third day of their flight, and all systems were functioning normally, Tass reported yesterday.

The craft was launched on day on an earth orbit. U.S. Centre sources in Houston said Soyuz-13 might try to link up with a Salyut space station which was launched secretly November 30. But there was indication in the brief news report Thursday indicating an attempt would be made.

The cosmonauts, Maj. Valentin Lebedev, completed a ration of scientific equipment, went a medical checkup with ground control station and morning exercises and had a fast. Tass said.

"The two 'feel well' and 'are functioning normally.' The flight is continuing," the report added. Caps were made of the "Orion" telescope system.

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EVEN SO...?

From Kippur War exposed the failure of the policy of situation and status quo, the policy which had been employed by government and which has brought a reaction of bitterness and indignation from many people.

Feeling is liable to result in a strengthening of the Likud, escape to their taking over the government.

THE GREAT DANGER IN THIS DEVELOPMENT parties making up the Likud, which is lead by Herut, are some of the political concepts which brought us to our present on.

Guard with anxiety the possibility of the strength and in- of this list increasing in the political life of Israel, a element that could block initiatives for a political accommoda- and increase the threat of war.

the division of opinions inside Hama'arach, we feel that loc has the potential to tip the balance in favour of a correct e of direction, and to introduce within a short period innova- in policy and leadership.

se various first signs of this in some of the new principles ma'arach's platform, and in the stand taken by some of the' ending people.

vite you to participate in a meeting, the object of which is ist in the setting up a barrier in front of the Likud list, and mine the possibility of aiding Hama'arach, while promoting ces of renewal now visible in that bloc.

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Prime Minister YIGAL ALLON, and AVRAHAM OFFER, have been invited to take part.

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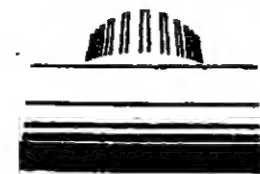
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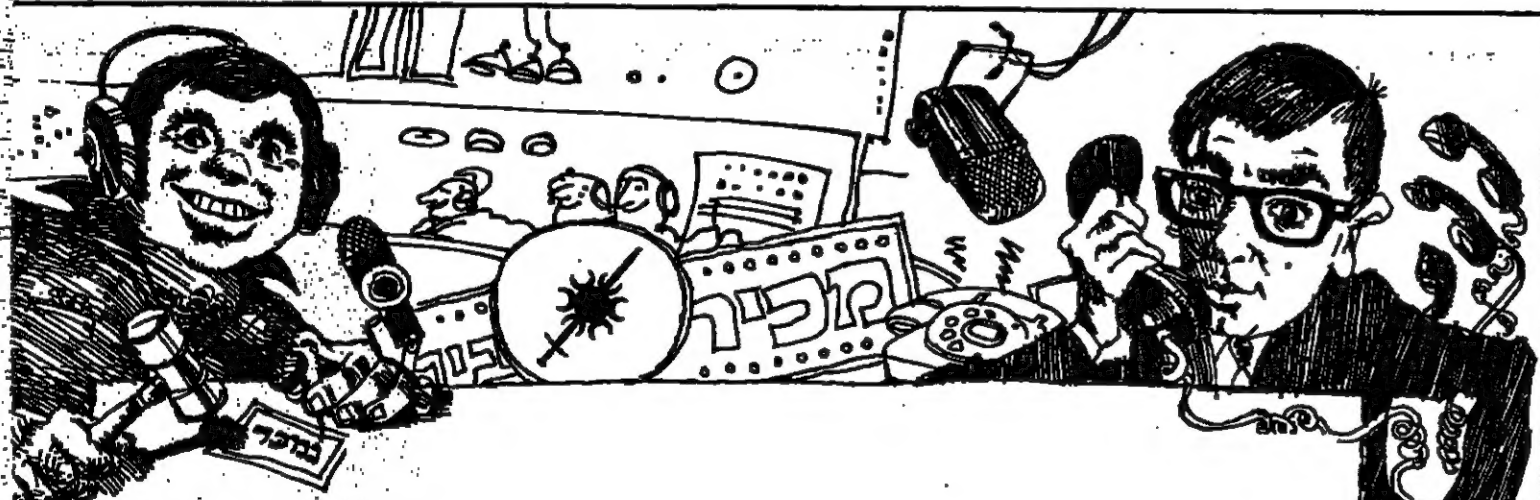
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הכרזת מלחמה

ON DECEMBER 31 YOU WILL DECIDE THE FUTURE OF THE STATE — YOUR FUTURE

YOU WILL DECIDE —

BETWEEN a prospect of peace with our neighbours

AND the road leading to unceasing war

BETWEEN a policy of close friendship with the U.S.A.

AND adventurism endangering this friendship

BETWEEN a policy of striving for peace and the strengthening of our security

AND the "not one inch" mentality

BETWEEN willingness for territorial compromise and the acceptance of defensible borders

AND the approach which disregards realities in the region and the world

BETWEEN a checking and adaption of policy to changing circumstances

AND the inability to learn and change

BETWEEN the declaration of peace and security as central aims

AND the preferring of the Areas to peace

BETWEEN the wish to maintain the Jewish character of Israel

AND willingness to add a large Arab population

BETWEEN readiness to maintain friendly relations with a Jordanian-Palestinian state

AND the ignoring of the existence and aspirations of the Palestinians

BETWEEN preparedness to go to a peace conference at any time, without prior conditions

AND the creation of difficulties, likely to doom the conference to failure before it starts

On December 31, you will have to decide
between political realism and a realistic
approach to security
and empty slogans and political rigidity

STRENGTHEN THE CAUSE OF PEACE AND SECURITY

Give them your vote and strengthen their voice

הצבעת

VOTE EMET Hama'arach/Israel Labour Party-Mapan

OUR VULNERABLE PARTIES

THE raucous debate in the Knesset yesterday following Mrs. Meir's political statement bore the heavy imprint of the election campaign. Mr. Begin mustered all of his considerable capacity for indignation and directed it against the Alignment's election effort to brand his Likud party as the party of war. At the same time Mr. Zadok thrust deeply into the Likud's campaign, which upbraids the Alignment for failures without however proposing clear policies of its own.

The fact is that in this unusual election campaign both of our major parties are easily given to being discomfited by the other.

The Alignment, the repository of the dominant Labour stream whose blend of pragmatism and iron determination won it long-standing pre-eminence in the Yishuv and the State, is more vulnerable in this election than ever in the past to the Likud's insistence on the need for change.

But the Likud, and especially its dominant and dogmatic Herut wing, has become more vulnerable to the Alignment's insistence on the need now more than ever before for that blend of determination and pragmatism which it represents.

Each party is well aware of its vulnerability and has in its own way tried to signal the voter that it is ready to act

accordingly. The Alignment campaign effort includes assurances that if and when it constitutes a new Government, there will be change — in the form of new faces.

The Likud — through its Liberal wing — tells the voter that there is room for territorial compromise. In theory it is easier to bring in new faces than to bring in new dogmas. But in our electoral system, which concentrates power at the very top party echelons and perpetuates old faces, that too is not simple.

Yet it is telling that Mr. Begin has not been able to accede to the appeals from within the Likud to bend, if only a degree or two, on his rigid territorial principle. The Liberals and other elements in the Likud have explored the Herut leader to counter the Alignment not simply by the old argument of a need for a change, but by letting the voter know that he too is prepared to change, to give a little. But Mr. Begin has stood firm.

It was precisely this rigidity which Mr. Zadok was able to expose yesterday to the chagrin of Mr. Begin's Likud partners.

Debates in the Knesset, however heated or acute, have little public resonance, especially in an election campaign. And as we enter the last week of the campaign it will be the slogans and clichés that will fill the air. But the voter will know that his choice is more complex than the slogans allow.

By ARI RATH and ANAN SAFADI
Jerusalem Post Correspondents

THE stage is set. The leading actors are already on the scene. But the main theme of the play — "Israeli-Arab Peace" — still seems as remote as ever. After days of tough bargaining, exercises in futility and diplomatic winds blowing hot and cold, the official word was finally out: the Middle East peace conference would open on Friday morning.

The intricate phrasing of the joint Soviet-American letter of invitation could stand up very well to any work of Talmudic sophistry. It managed to find a redeeming formula distinguishing between U.N. auspices and Soviet-American co-chairmanship of the conference and tried to solve the thorny problem of Palestinian representation by saying that the parties had agreed to discuss the question of "other participants from the Middle East" during the first stage of the conference.

But even then, Syria, one of the Middle East's most ferocious and savage belligerents, has decided to stay away from Geneva, at least at the opening stage, making it a rump conference at the start.

The magic formula that was to bring Israel, Egypt and Jordan to the negotiating table is there. But can peace after four bloody wars and over 50 years of Arab hostility really be attained through magic formulas?

Geneva does not seem to bode well for the successful outcome of a peace conference.

Despite its magnificent setting, the marble-walled Palais des Nations — former seat of the defunct League of Nations — has a tradition of failure to achieve anything even resembling peace. Certainly the city on the shores of picturesque Lac Lemane, surrounded by the towering, snow-covered Alps, topped by Mont Blanc, is an attractive gathering place for international delegations, even in winter, when the weather is crisp and sunny. But the labyrinth of the 18-kilometre long Palais des Nations corridors,

with their Kafkaesque atmosphere, seem a more indicative omen than the beautiful scenery.

The Council Chamber, where the peace conference is due to open this morning, witnessed three months of futile diplomatic bargaining, yielding results merely on paper, during the 1954 conferences on Indochina and Korea. The marble bas-reliefs over its entrance door, with the inscription "Here is a great work of peace in which all can participate," and the wall-paintings inside, depicting Justice, Strength, Peace, Law and Intelligence, do not seem to inspire delegates who come with preconceived ideas. Will the Middle East conference be an exception to the rule and at last do justice to Geneva's reputation as the "City of Peace"?

Probably not, if one is to go by some of the arrival statements here and by what has been said in the last few days by President Sadat of Egypt and by spokesmen for the Palestine Liberation Organization, which the Arabs claim to be the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Total withdrawal

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy said on his arrival here that he would "strive with determination to bring about the total withdrawal of Israel from occupied Arab territories, and to restore their national rights to the Palestinians." What these national rights are, was spelled out more on Tuesday by the P.L.O. Geneva representative, David Barakat: the disappearance of Israel as a political entity and the creation of an Arab-Jewish democratic republic in what was once British Mandatory Palestine.

But one was able to find some solace in the fairly moderate statement made on arrival by Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, who, although consistently refraining from calling the conference a peace conference, said that the Soviet Union would show "goodwill and realism to arrive at a good decision," and would "do its best to guarantee the success of the conference."

Perhaps the Soviet Union has come round after the October War



The Palais des Nations is the site of the Geneva Conference on the Middle East. The League of Nations built the Palais to ensure peace. It is now administered by the United Nations.

to accepting the American principle as summed up once by Joseph Sisco — "Keep talking and stop shooting." Be that as it may, one thing seems certain — Russia will not let the U.S. arrange a "Pax Americana" in the Middle East.

Whatever is decided will have to be done with the full consent of the Soviet Union.

The Russians are certain to cash in on the fact that they agreed to play along with U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in letting him try out his mastery in magic formulas and diplomatic gimmickry that almost amounted to the squaring of the circle when it came to solving the problems of U.N. auspices and Palestinian representation. But they are one of the two co-chairmen of the conference and are expected to use this role to the fullest.

On the brighter side of the mood surrounding the peace conference's difficult curtain-raising stage, one can note the friendly mingling of Israeli and Arab journalists in and around the Palais des Nations. If there were still need to prove the wisdom of direct negotiations, free of the meddling of intermediaries with their own axes to grind, one need only to join the crowd in "Salle 13" for a few minutes. But from there to some basic political Israel-Arab understanding the road is very long — perhaps endless.

There is no question that the visits to Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip during the past few years by some of these Arab journalists have

contributed in no small measure to their attitude towards their Israeli colleagues at the Palais des Nations.

Dr. Kissinger — the master-mind behind the Geneva peace talks, decided to arrive here last, just on the eve of the conference, as if making a grand entrance to his own big show. The maintenance of his reputation as international fixer-upper and peace-maker depends on the outcome, or at least the smooth sailing, of the peace conference during the next few months.

Lasting settlement

Since he has declared a number of times that he really means to achieve a lasting settlement and not another makeshift arrangement in the war-torn Middle East, one can expect him to pull possible strings, on and behind the scenes, to prevent the conference from getting bogged down at its various stages of tough bargaining. The big question is whether he will keep to his word not to exercise any undue pressure on Israel just to deliver the goods, which is exactly what the Arabs would like to happen.

Will the Arabs make it easy for him, and put up a moderate negotiating profile, at least at the initial stage, despite the intransigence of their public statements? Or will they decide to try to get the issue on to the agenda right from the start, thus forcing the Americans' hands?

To judge again by statement on Wednesday, Kissinger seems to be the most tangible results, pointing to the threatening reminder in the Middle East remains highly alive and that the cease-fire fragile, it seems that they opted for the latter course.

The Rome Airport meeting Arab terrorists and the last plane hijack ordeal have heavy shadows on the conference.

These, coupled with Syria's refusal to attend the talks, embolden the Arabs here in Geneva great deal. But on Wednesday, apparently coordinated as of Falmay and Gromyko, an at-self-assurance again prevails among the several dozen newsmen assembled here, who seemed to feel that they were something going for them and basically they have the hand of the two super-powers. For it was not even a question whether this would become a farce of "Babel" — not speak of "Sala" which is the Arabic word for peace and conciliation.

As a veteran correspondent has gone through the futile tangle of the 1954 Indochina conference at the same Palais des Nations put it:

"This whole thing is a complete farce. Nothing can come of this kind of attitude by Arabs and with the continued massive belligerence of the Palestinian terrorists. I've seen it happen before."

But then there is still the ray of hope that the very fact of an Israel-Arab meeting under a description "Middle East peace conference" may create its own dynamic. As one declared Israeli delegate said: "Even if we don't succeed, and personally I don't believe anything will come out of it — at least we can tell ourselves our children that we tried to make peace."

These are the grim realities of Geneva. But perhaps the days and weeks ahead will tell another, brighter story.

Dry Bones



ISRAEL PRESS

'Geneva no herald of the Messiah'

Davar (Histadrut) says that though exaggerated hopes should not be pinned on the Geneva Conference, which does not "herald the days of the Messiah...we must remember that this is the first time official Israel and Arab representatives are meeting since the Lausanne Conference some twenty-five years ago. There have never been Israel-Arab negotiations at so high a level as foreign ministers. Though this is no guarantee for success, without such talks peace could never be attained." The paper recalls that high-ranking Israeli spokesmen have said she was prepared to go more than half way to meet the Arabs (and this does not mean geographically), and will display maximum flexibility, in so far as her defence needs permit. "Let us go to Geneva in the hope that this is the first step on the long road to peace," the paper concludes.

She'arim (Po'alei Agudat Israel) warns against the Government's tendency to see everything through rose-coloured glasses. "This complex also affected the position taken by the Government in talks with the U.S. on the Geneva Conference. It took too optimistic a view of American readiness to fulfil promises and of its own ability to take action against violation of promises." The paper also attributes the shortcomings preceding the Yom Kippur War, and the erroneous evaluation of the Arabs' and Russians' intentions, to this "rose-coloured glasses" complex, which is also behind the Government's undue optimism regarding its ability to influence the Syrians to take a more humane attitude regarding the prisoners.

Ma'arezt (non-party) expresses profound distress over the killing of forty-two Israeli POWs by the Syrians. "Now that the Government has stated this officially, there is no doubt of the accuracy of this figure. In view of past experience of the Syrians' maltreatment of prisoners, there are grounds for assuming the number is even greater. The Syrians are following the example of Nazi Germany in ignoring the universally agreed standards on treatment of POWs." All the excuses given by Syrian spokesmen for their refusal to exchange POWs are empty phrases. Israel must draw world attention to the Syrians' barbaric behaviour.

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Readers' letters

FACTS ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST

To the Editor of The Jerusalem Post
Sir, — For an unbiased look at the Middle East before the Balfour Declaration, let us examine the 1911 Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Under the heading Jerusalem we find: "The population in 1905 was about 60,000 (Moslems 7,000, Christians 13,000, Jews 40,000)."

Is this the Arab Jerusalem before 1948 that the Arabs want?

Even more illuminating is the material on "Barbary Pirates" which includes the following: "The first half of the 17th century may be described as the flowering time of the Barbary Pirates... all traders belonging to nations which did not pay blackmail in order to secure immunity were liable to be taken at sea. The payment of blackmail, disguised as presents or ransoms, did not always secure safety with these faithless barbarians. The most powerful states in Europe descended to make payments to them and to tolerate their insults.... The continued existence of this African piracy was indeed a disgrace to Europe, for it was due to the jealousy of the powers themselves. France encouraged them during her rivalry with Spain; and when she had no further need of them they were supported against her by Great Britain and Holland. In the 18th century British public men were not ashamed to say that Barbary piracy was a useful check on the competition of weaker Mediterranean nations in the carrying trade.... An extensive list of such punitive expeditions could be made out, down to the American operations of 1801-5 and 1815. But in no case was the attack pushed home, and it rarely

happened that the aggrieved Christian state refused in the end to make a money payment in order to secure peace. The frequent wars among them gave the pirates numerous opportunities of breaking their engagements, of which they never failed to take advantage.... Lord Exmouth... in combination with a Dutch squadron under Admiral Van de Capellen administered a smashing bombardment to Algiers. The lesson terrified the pirates both of that city and of Tunis into giving up over 3,000 prisoners and making fresh promises. But they were not reformed and were not capable of reformation, Algiers renewed its piracies and slave taking, though on a smaller scale.... The great pirate city was not in fact thoroughly tamed till its conquest by France in 1850."

Has anything changed?

HARRY J. LIPKIN
Professor of Physics
Weissmann Institute of Science
Rehovot
Rehovot, December 10.

THE DANGER OF A COUNTER-BOYCOTT

To the Editor of The Jerusalem Post
Sir, — On December 4, you reported that Dr. A. Rafail of the Israel Manufacturers' Association had proposed that the Western world launch a counter-boycott against the Arab states. While the basic thought may be sound ("fight fire with fire"), nevertheless, it overlooks a most important fact.

The real danger in a counter-boycott would be that the Arabs would become even more dependent upon the Soviet Union for supplies. This economic dependence is one of the USSR's major goals in the Middle East and is one of the primary factors which fuels the fires of war. Ultimately, economic dependence could lead to political dependence, and the Arab states are clearly in danger of losing their precious "Arab lands" — this time to a superpower they think to be their friend.

Peace is the last thing the USSR wants for the Middle East. It would bring further ties between the Arabs and the West and under-

mine Soviet influence. The end of the Arab-Israeli struggle would do away with the necessity of Arab arms purchases and Soviet advisers. Strangely enough, the destruction of the State of Israel would do the same.

Perhaps a far more effective strategy than counter-boycott would be closer cultural contacts between the Arabs and the West, including increased trade. Perhaps the undoing of Mr. Dulles' actions in Egypt would be a first step to peace.

JOHN A. TYDENES
Jerusalem, December 9.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

To the Editor of The Jerusalem Post
Sir, — I was very glad to see Mrs. L. Tuckman's letter on the subject of daylight saving time (December 8), and I heartily support her views. I feel sure that the fatigue, weakening of health and consequent reduction in output which would be the result of working shopping, queuing for buses, etc. during the extra hours of greatest heat in the summer, will considerably outweigh any saving in electricity.

The daylight saving system may be suitable for Europe, where climatic conditions are entirely different from those in Israel, but I firmly believe that it is not practicable in Israel.

SHULAMITH GAVRI
Tel Aviv, December 7.

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